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ABSTRACT

This book uses biographical, longitudinal, and reflexive methods to chronicle, analyze, and theorize about the personal and sociocultural dimensions of motivation in the biographies of adult learners. Following an introduction and explanation of research methods, chapter 3 examines the problem of stated reasons for learning and the arbitrariness of separating career and personal motivation. Chapter 4 uses two case studies to show marginality, change, and breakdown in individual lives. It examines the role of significant others in strengthening self and risk-taking. Chapter 5 focuses on men, motives, and changing lifestyles in a community in distress. Chapter 6 focuses on the role of self-objects, showing how one man progressed toward a more balanced lifestyle and integrated self. Chapter 7 identifies differing responses to dislocation in the lives of two women and their male partners. Chapter 8 focuses on two women in crisis, exploring how personal and occupational insecurities feed off each other and how life in stressful occupations can drive women and men to breakdown and to education as a potential solution. Chapter 9 describes the "border country" between past and present, Wales and England, working- and middle-class cultures. Chapter 10 concerns an Asian man and woman negotiating different cultures and composing new lifestyles in higher education. Chapter 11 analyzes learners' experiences of higher education. Chapter 12 considers managing change and the nature of subjectivity in conditions of profound uncertainty. Appendixes include a list of 140 references and an index. (YLB)

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